

Well, this is it. This is the moment -- *the* moment. The one that is often made dramatic and triumphant in movies, books, and TV shows. I am not writing “WILL YOU MARRY ME?” across the sky or proposing at halftime of a football game. It will just be Claire and me, nobody else around.

These are among the many thoughts that crossed my mind while I tried to sleep the night before I proposed to Claire. It was a restless night, to be sure. I could not stop wondering what I would do if she found the ring, if my plan was spoiled, or if my plan was too corny to begin with. Either way, I was going through with it, and there was no turning back.

The morning we awoke, our thoughts were strictly on preparing for our canoe trip. Well, those were Claire's thoughts, anyway, and I did my best to make it seem like these were my thoughts as well. Nevertheless, we were packing up our camping gear, eating a quick breakfast, brushing our teeth, and doing all those other little tasks one needs to do in order to make the day as easy and smooth as possible. When I felt I would have a free moment, I was going to slip Claire's grandmother's ring (which I had been holding agonizingly for a week, constantly worrying about it being damaged, lost, or discovered) into our camera case, so Claire could happen upon it with some gentle nudging from me.